

New description
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Device for connecting an exterior handle to a closing
system

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Description

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Device for connecting an exterior handle to a closing
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The invention relates to a device for connecting an exterior handle mounted on the exterior skin of a motor vehicle to a closing system, more particularly for vehicle doors and vehicle hinged lids, according to the preamble of claim 1.

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From DE 44 05 383 A1 an exterior handle assembly for a motor vehicle door is known having a bearing yoke which can be prefitted on the inside of the door exterior panel and in which are installed a draw bar separated from the door handle and acting on a lock release lever, as well as a holding plate for a closing cylinder. The door handle which is loaded with spring force, and the closing cylinder

are able to be mounted from outside by means of a detent device when the door is closed. For assembly three openings are provided, namely a bearing opening for mounting the door handle, an operating opening for
5 connecting the door handle to the draw bar as well as a closing opening for the closing cylinder.

The known exterior handle assembly has a number of complicated individual parts so that the cost of
10 manufacturing and assembling the known exterior door assembly is really quite high. Furthermore there is the drawback that the known assembly takes up a lot of room in the space between the exterior panel of the door and the interior panel. Furthermore the assembly has a relatively
15 large number of openings in the exterior panel of the door which have to be sealed at high cost in order to prevent damp from penetrating into the space between the interior and exterior panels of the door.

Furthermore in order to connect the exterior handle assembly to the locking system (door lock) there are always at least three assembly steps which are required: first the draw bar which acts on the lock release lever has to be pre-assembled. Then in individual assembly steps each ^{the}
20 door handle is connected to the draw bar and the closing cylinder is connected to the locking system.
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~~The object of the invention is therefore to provide a device for connecting an exterior handle mounted on the exterior skin of a motor vehicle to a closing system which is simple and cost-effective to manufacture and which can be fitted at low cost.~~
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10 This is achieved according to the invention through a device with the features of claim 1.

20 The device according to the invention has the advantage that an exterior handle of a wing, e.g. a door, and a connecting element which can be inserted from the exterior skin of a motor vehicle can be brought into interaction with each other so that the exterior handle and the connecting element are mutually entrained. By way of example when the exterior handle is operated to open a vehicle door the exterior handle entrains the connecting element. During the reverse procedure the connecting element then entrains the exterior handle. The connecting element thereby serves as a connection between the exterior handle and a closing system of the door.

25 The device according to the invention furthermore has a small number of individual parts which can be manufactured without complication and at low cost. Furthermore the small number of parts and their simple method of construction enables a low-cost assembly. More particularly it is possible by means of an individual assembly step to connect the exterior handle to the closing system fixed inside a bodywork chamber. By closing system is meant here a door lock with its individual components.

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Furthermore the space required by the device is small so that it can be installed without problem in particular in doors having a small structural space. Furthermore there
30 is the special advantage that the device for connecting the exterior handle to the closing system enables fitting to be carried out from the outside of the door. In this way assembly is particularly easy and simple. It is also ensured that a door which is already painted no longer
35 becomes scratched during the assembly.

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compression spring described it is proposed to tension the exterior handle through a spring with a handle shell of the vehicle door.

- 5 The advantage of these spring arrangements is that by deliberately saving space the entire assembly becomes more compact and the manufacturing costs are reduced through the lower number of component parts.
- 10 In a further development of the invention the insert part can be fixed relative to the exterior skin through an opening in the interior skin. By way of example fixing is carried out by a positive locking connection between the insert part and handle shell.
- 15 The connection between the blocking element and the connecting element is preferably produced by snap-fitting or detent elements. By way of example a detent element is provided on the blocking element and engages in a detent opening of the connecting element. As an alternative or in addition to this it is proposed that the connection between the blocking element and connecting element is undertaken by a separate part which can be actuated through the interior skin of the vehicle door, for example an actuating element which acts on the blocking element. For this the interior skin has an assembly and dismantling opening for producing and disengaging the connection between the connecting element and closing cylinder.
- 20
- 25
- 30 In a further development of the invention the blocking element is designed as a locking pawl which interacts with a rotary spring bolt of the door lock provided as the closing system. The locking pawl prevents the movement of

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the rotary spring bolt when the vehicle door is closed. By actuating the exterior handle the locking pawl is moved so that it releases the rotary spring bolt and the vehicle door can be opened through rotation of the rotary spring bolt with further actuation of the exterior handle.

The idea on which the invention is based will now be explained in further detail with reference to the embodiments illustrated in the drawings in which:

Figure 1 is a perspective view of a section of a motor vehicle body with a vehicle door;

Figure 2 shows a diagrammatic partial sectional view of an exterior handle of the vehicle door according to Figure 1 connected to a door lock;

Figures 2a/b show views according to Figure 2 with fastening devices for an insert part;

Figure 2c shows a diagrammatic partial sectional view of the exterior handle connected to the door lock and an infrared receiver mounted in the insert part;

Figure 2d shows a diagrammatic partial sectional view of the exterior handle connected to the door lock and tensioned with a handle shell;

5 Figure 4 shows a further development of the insert part with the closing cylinder and connecting element according to Figure 3.

The closing cylinder 32' serves to lock and unlatch a locking pawl or rotary spring bolt 6 of the door lock 5 by actuation of a locking system (not shown). When the vehicle door 1 is closed the rotary spring bolt engages round a closing element 7 mounted on the B-pillar of the vehicle body.

Figure 2 shows the exterior handle 31 mounted on the door exterior panel 8 of the vehicle door 1 and connected to the door lock 5. This is part of the exterior handle arrangement 3 which is provided for operating the aforementioned locking pawl, rotary spring bolt 6 and locking of the door lock 5 and is fitted into the end of the vehicle door 1 directed towards the B-pillar. The locking pawl and rotary spring bolt 6 are not shown in Figure 2.

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The insert part 32 is mounted and fixed in the door exterior panel 8 so that it is secured against unauthorised removal. This security action is provided by a detent connection (not shown) of the insert part 32 with the door exterior panel 8. In order to prevent ~~damp~~^{moisture} from penetrating into the interspace between the door exterior panel 8 and door interior panel 9 a seal (likewise not shown here) is mounted between the door exterior panel 8 and insert part 32. This is of particular advantage for the proper functioning of the electric and/or electronic elements mounted in the vehicle door 1, such as for example sensors of a central locking system. In addition further seals (not shown in further detail) are provided between the exterior handle 31 and door exterior panel 8 and the handle shell 33.

The closing cylinder 32' has a paddle 35 which is in active connection with a lock follower 36 of the door lock 5 mounted on the door interior panel 9. By operating the closing cylinder 32' the paddle 35 is moved so that the locking pawl or rotary spring bolt 6 of the door lock 5 is unlatched or locked.

30 The door lock 5 is connected to the sliding sleeve 40 through an operating lever 37 which is provided for actuating the locking pawl and rotary spring bolt 6. To this end the operating lever 37 has a detent element 39

which can lock in an opening 39' of the sliding sleeve 40. The connection between the door lock 5 and operating lever 37 is produced through a screw connection 38. As an alternative to this however any other type of connection is also possible.

The exterior handle arrangement 3 described here with its connection between the exterior handle 31 and door lock 5 has many advantages. It requires only a small number of individual parts and is therefore cost-effective to manufacture. Furthermore the assembly costs are very slight. This is due on the one hand to the small number of individual parts required and on the other to the small number of assembly steps which are necessary in order to fit the exterior handle assembly 3 into the vehicle door 1. The number of assembly steps is substantially restricted to two steps. In a first step the exterior handle 31 is inserted into the handle shell 33. Then the insert part 32 is inserted together with the closing cylinder 32' and sliding sleeve 40 into the aforementioned assembly opening and connected to the door lock 5. The sliding sleeve 40 is thereby mounted on the exterior handle 31, 31' and engaged in the door lock 5 by means of the detent connection 39, 39'. This single assembly movement thus ensures that both the insert part 32 is connected with the closing cylinder 32' and also the exterior handle 31 or 31' is connected with the door lock 5 through the sliding sleeve 40. No additional assembly step is therefore required to connect the exterior handle 31 to the door lock 5.

A further advantage lies in the small amount of space required. This is small so that the device according to the invention can be fitted particularly well in vehicle doors having a small assembly space. These are for example
5 vehicle doors of mini-vans and also vehicle doors where a number of other modules (window lifter, speaker etc) are fitted which likewise take up a certain amount of assembly space.

10 The opening of the vehicle door 1 by means of the exterior handle assembly 3 described above will now be explained briefly. In order to open the vehicle door 1 first the locking pawl or rotary spring bolt 6 of the door lock 5 must be unlatched by actuating the closing cylinder 32'.
15 Then by actuating the exterior handle 31 the locking pawl is moved so that the rotary spring bolt 6 is released and is turned by pulling on the exterior handle 31. The vehicle door 1 can then be opened. If the exterior handle 31 is now let go then both the exterior handle 31 and also
20 the sliding sleeve 40 are pushed simultaneously through the single compression spring 41 into their original position. The arrangement of a second return spring is therefore not necessary. This saves further space so that the exterior handle assembly becomes further compact.

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As mentioned above, the insert part 32 is connected and fixed to the door exterior panel 8 by means of a detent connection according to Figure 2. An alternative fixing is shown in Figures 2a and 2b.

Figure 2a shows the fixing of the insert part 32 by means of a screw connection 50 on the handle shell 33. A further possible screw connection 51 of the insert part 32 with the handle shell 33 is shown in Figure 2b. Openings 60 and 61 are provided in the door interior panel 9 for the purpose of assembling and dismantling these screw connections 50 and 51. These are readily accessible when the vehicle door 1 is opened so that the screw connection 50 and 51 can be easily assembled and dismantled without problem.

As shown in Figure 2a, a further opening 60' is provided for releasing the detent connection between the operating lever 37 and sliding sleeve 40 which is likewise readily accessible when the vehicle door 1 is opened.

Figure 2c shows the exterior handle 31 which is connected to the door lock 5 and whose associated insert part 32 has no closing cylinder but an infrared receiver of an automatic control system of the door lock 5. The infrared receiver serves to receive a control signal with which the locking pawl or rotary spring bolt 6 of the door lock 5 is unlatched and locked by means of servo motors (not shown). The embodiment illustrated here is particularly suitable for passenger doors and boot lids. For the vehicle door it is advantageous to provide the insert part 32 with both the infrared receiver of the automatic control system of the door lock 5 and a closing cylinder 31' for emergency opening of the vehicle door.

A further possible arrangement of the spring system of the exterior handle 31 is shown in Figure 2d. The exterior handle 31 is thereby tensioned with the handle shell 33 by means of a yoke spring 70 so that it is pushed after its
5 actuation together with the sliding sleeve 40 back again into the original position prior to actuation.

Figure 3 shows on an enlarged scale a further embodiment of an insert part 32 with a closing cylinder 32' and a U-
10 shaped connecting element 45.

A closing cylinder 32' is mounted centrally in the insert part 32 and its paddle 35 projects through an opening 45b of the connecting element 45. Furthermore the insert part
15 32 has on either side guides 32a for guiding the guide elements 45a of the connecting element 45.

The door lock 5 (not shown here) is connected to the connection element 45 through a detent connection. For
20 this the connecting element 45 has an opening 45c into which a detent element (not shown here) of the door lock 5 engages for connecting the door lock 5 directly to the connecting element 45.

25 The exterior handle 31 (not shown) lies in this embodiment on the stop faces 80 of the guide elements 45a. If the exterior handle 31 is actuated then the connecting element 45 is moved along the guides 32a towards the head of the insert part 32. A compression spring 41 whose arrangement
30 is shown in Figure 4 is thereby compressed so that after actuation of the exterior handle 31 (letting go the

exterior handle) the exterior handle 31 and connecting element 45 are moved back into their original position prior to the actuation of the exterior handle.

- 5 The connecting element 45 shown in Figure 4 has, unlike the connecting element shown in Figure 3, an indirect connection with the door lock 5. For this a detent element 45c is mounted on the connecting element 45 and engages in an opening 37' of the operating lever 37. This operating
- 10 lever 37 is as already explained above connected to the door lock 5 and serves to actuate the locking pawl or rotary spring bolt 6 of the door lock 5.

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